

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 494

Introduced by Assembly Member V. Manuel Pérez

February 20, 2013

An act to amend Section 2053.1 of, and to add Section 2053.2 to, the Penal Code, relating to prisoners.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 494, as introduced, V. Manuel Pérez. Prisoners: literacy and education.

Existing law requires the Secretary of the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to implement in every state prison literacy programs that are designed to ensure that, upon parole, inmates are able to achieve a 9th grade reading level. Existing law further requires the department to prepare an implementation plan for the literacy programs and to request sufficient funds to make the programs available to a certain percentage of inmates by specified dates.

This bill would require the department to request sufficient funding to make the literacy programs available to 75% of inmates by January 1, 2016. The bill would also require the Secretary of the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to implement in every state prison educational programs designed to ensure that, upon parole, inmates are able to acquire a high school diploma, or its equivalent. The department would also be required to prepare an implementation plan for the educational programs and to request sufficient funds to make the programs available to a certain percentage of inmates by specified dates. This bill would also make a technical, nonsubstantive change to these provisions.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 2053.1 of the Penal Code is amended to
2 read:

3 2053.1. (a) ~~The Director of the Department of Corrections~~
4 *Secretary of the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation*
5 shall implement in every state prison literacy programs that are
6 designed to ensure that upon parole inmates are able to achieve a
7 ninth-grade reading level. The department shall prepare an
8 implementation plan for this program, and shall request the
9 necessary funds to implement this program as follows:

10 ~~(a)~~

11 (1) To make the program available to at least 25 percent of
12 eligible inmates in the state prison system by July 1, 1991.

13 ~~(b)~~

14 (2) To make the program available to at least 60 percent of
15 eligible inmates in the state prison system by January 1, 1996.

16 (3) *To make the program available to at least 75 percent of*
17 *eligible inmates in the state prison system by January 1, 2016.*

18 ~~In~~

19 (b) *In* complying with the requirements of this section, the
20 department shall give strong consideration to ~~computer-assisted~~
21 *computer-assisted* training and other innovations which have
22 proven to be effective in reducing illiteracy of disadvantaged adults.

23 SEC. 2. Section 2053.2 is added to the Penal Code, to read:

24 2053.2. (a) The Secretary of the Department of Corrections
25 and Rehabilitation shall implement in every state prison educational
26 programs that are designed to ensure that upon parole inmates are
27 able to acquire a high school diploma or its equivalent. The
28 department shall prepare an implementation plan for this program,
29 and shall request the necessary funds to implement this program
30 as follows:

31 (1) To make the program available to at least 25 percent of
32 eligible inmates in the state prison system by July 1, 2016.

33 (2) To make the program available to at least 60 percent of
34 eligible inmates in the state prison system by January 1, 2019.

- 1 (3) To make the program available to at least 75 percent of
- 2 eligible inmates in the state prison system by January 1, 2022.
- 3 (b) In complying with the requirements of this section, the
- 4 department shall give strong consideration to computer-assisted
- 5 training and other innovations which have proven to be effective
- 6 in teaching and educating disadvantaged adults.

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